

FESTAS DO ESPÍRITO SANTO

Grupo do Espírito Santo da Paróquia de Nossa Senhora da Assunção, New Bedford, Massachusetts

BROTHERHOOD

Brotherhood	Church <i>Grupo</i>
Year founded	1983
Current number of members	<p>The feast was founded among a group of 10 <i>casais</i> and 2 <i>solteiras</i> all of whom were from Cabo Verde. Two were from Ilha de São Vicente and the remaining founders were from Ilha de Brava.</p> <p>The number of participants in the “<i>Grupo Espírito Santo</i>” have diminished in recent years due to death and people moving away, but the membership of the association holds at around 20 people—all from Cape Verde including Ilha do Fogo, and Ilha de Santiago (cidade da Praia), with most from Ilha Brava.</p>
Meetings and activities during the year	<p>The <i>Grupo Espírito Santo</i> will hold meetings sometimes. When Padre Pio - an important priest in the Society - was alive, the members would have meetings every single month at the house of one of the <i>casais</i>, which sometimes included dinners. The families also had contact during the year outside of the context of the feasts.</p> <p>Meetings are held at the church to discuss the feasts. There were also dances held at Monte Pio to raise funds. The live music dance nights featuring <i>samba</i>, <i>morna</i>, <i>valsa</i>, <i>coladeira</i>, and mazaruka.</p> <p>Dinners are sometimes held and a choral group was also formed.</p>
Hall	The Feast is held at the church hall.

THE FESTA: GENERAL INFORMATION

Year founded	1983
Date	The feast is always held on Pentecost Sunday.

FESTAS DO ESPÍRITO SANTO

Festa ritual model	<p>As a Cape Verdean feast, with reference to both Cape Verde and other feasts in New Bedford. Mrs. Freitas had previously attended a Espírito Santo feast in Brava, Cape Verde, which she said was brought to the island by a shipwrecked <i>casal</i> from Madeira. How the Madeirenses came to celebrate the Azorean feast is unknown.</p>
Organization of the Festa	<p>The 20 members that make up the permanent directorship/membership of the Society jointly organize the Feast.</p> <p>There is no Mordomo.</p> <p>The membership will select the person responsible for running the following year's Feast among the <i>casais</i> through a collective and ad hoc system. The "<i>Festeiro</i>" as they call the lead organizer will keep the crown throughout the year and is usually announced in January.</p> <p>Many have served repeatedly as <i>Festeiro</i>, although not all of the members have served.</p>
Number of workers	<p>Thirty people work at the hall on the day of the Feast, but everyone that goes also brings food. The Feast is not exclusively Cape Verdean however, as there are Azoreans that attend it and also work at it.</p>
Number of crowns	<p>There are 2 (two) Crowns. The 1983 Crown was bought in New Bedford at Casa Ribeira, costing \$280 and purchased from money pooled by the members.</p> <p>The 1999 Crown was bought on Rivet Street in 1999 by \$160.</p>
Flags	<p>There are two flags and other bandeirinhas which are all made by Maria Freitas. She also made the Rainha's <i>Capa</i>.</p>
Queens	<p>There is a Queen who gets dressed up. In the beginning she was not really dressed like a typical queen according to Mrs. Freitas, but now, there is a <i>rapariga</i> dressed like a typical queen. The queen has some <i>ajudantes</i>. The queen's <i>capa</i> belongs to the <i>Grupo</i> and was made by Maria Freitas.</p>

FESTAS DO ESPÍRITO SANTO

THE FESTA: RITUAL COMPOSITION

Domingas

There are no *domingas*, but the society allows non-members to have the crown in their house for a particular weekend during the year and are allowed to make a festa with it. This is not confined to the seven weeks prior to the feast however. Previously the crown would rotate once a month in the home of one of the member's *casais*, but this tradition ended as not all people took good care of the crown.

Now, during the period of the Feast the crown will go to members' houses and to non-members (including non Cape Verdeans or even non-Portuguese) during the year.

Musical accompaniment during the Festas

There has been musical accompaniment of Portuguese *violão*, *concertina*, and the *orgão*. There is also a car that broadcasts recorded music, and songs of the church are sung in Portuguese and in *Crioulo*, as well as the Hino de Espírito Santo.

Parades and Processions

The Feast includes the national flags of Cape Verde and the United States of America as well as a Church flag and an Espírito Santo flag. There is a music car and the *terço* is recited.

The police used to be involved but they became too expensive to pay.

No politicians march, but priests have marched including a Bishop from Cape Verde.

There is no participation of other Espírito Santo Irmandades, but several churches in the region with large Cape Verdean populations will send delegations to march and participate in the feast, including: Brockton Sao Joao (church), Santa Catarina Scituate (church), Santa Maria Boston (church). Members of the *Grupo* Espírito Santo will conversely reciprocate by attending the Feasts of these other churches, for example, when a group of *casal* members went to the Boston *Festa* do Espírito Santo de Nossa Senhora de Fátima.

This has included participation in a 4 thousand person Cape Verdean feast in Dorchester and all the big Cape Verdean Church feasts.

FESTAS DO ESPÍRITO SANTO

Members of the *Grupo Espírito Santo* will also go to other feasts.

Holy Ghost soups

There is no *sopa*, but the meal nonetheless is open and offered for free to the public, with the meal served as a pot luck dinner that includes *bacalhau*, *cachupa*, *arroz*, *carne*, *peixe*, *galinha*, *pasteis*, and cake.

With no soup there is no island of origin, but according to Mrs. Freitas the *cachupa* is not made in reference to any specific island. As she says, “Cachupa is all the same”... “*as diferenças na cachupa de cada ilha só existe na falar.*”

The Feast is attended by some 400-500 people.

Number of people who attend the Festa

Almost all of those attending are from Cape Verde, along with their children.

Written by Miguel Moniz (CRIA - Centro em Rede de Investigação em Antropologia, ISCTE, IUL). Information collected by Miguel Moniz in 2012, through an interview with Mary M. Freitas, co-organizer of the festa who migrated to New Bedford in 1977. Final edition of the text: Dulcinea Gil.